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THE APPRECIATION OF MUSIC

READING
COURSE

No. 31

REPRINTED OCTOBER, 1927

THE APPRECIATION OF MUSIC¹

When we speak of the appreciation of music it must be understood that we have in mind three elements, three kinds or manners of experience, each a source of pleasure which can, in a general way, be distinguished from the other two. The first is the physical perception of tone—pure, balanced, and shaded tone. A single tone uttered by a great singer or drawn from a violin by a great performer may give intense pleasure quite apart from its connection with other tones or from what we call musical expression.

The second consists in recognition of the composer's skill in the construction of his work, as shown in the richness and variety of the harmony, in the ingenuity and imagination in the combination and succession of melodies or themes in building up an intricate design; also recognition of technical skill on the part of a player or a singer.

The third element is the emotional reaction, the response of the feeling nature, the consciousness that what is perceived by the sense of hearing and grasped and organized by the understanding is beautiful and is intended for pleasure and joy. The music seems to the hearer not merely charming in sound and interesting in construction, but also expressive. He feels that there was some thought or longing or other emotion in the composer's mind which he was trying to reveal and to call forth an answering emotion in the mind of the lis-

¹ Acknowledgment is due to Prof. Edward Dickinson, of Oberlin College, who prepared the introduction to this course and recommended books for the list.

tener. If the music is worthy, the hearer may be conscious of a stirring of his finer nature and may believe that there results a permanent enrichment of his mind and spirit. Some pieces of music appeal most strongly to the first or sensuous element; some (for instance a fugue) to the second or intellectual element; others (we may instance the higher types of religious music) to the third.

Everyone who wishes to advance in the love and appreciation of music should give heed to all of these factors of enjoyment. Many teachers of music and writers of books on musical appreciation are inclined to neglect the third factor. A technical knowledge of the methods of the art of sculpture is not needed to enjoy the beauty of the Venus di Milo. The same principle holds in music. The student, therefore, is urged to remember that some knowledge of the second element of appreciation will add another species of enjoyment to the other two, but is not a substitute for them; that a true appreciation of music is to be developed not by reading about music, but by hearing music; and that one's duty is to avoid harsh and trivial music, to use every opportunity for hearing fine music, and in hearing it to give oneself frankly and sympathetically to the beauty it reveals and the joy it affords.

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1. (The) Fundamentals of Music. Karl W. Gehrken. Boston, Oliver Ditson Co., 1924. 211 p.

A handbook for students and general readers, consisting of a readable presentation of the fundamentals of music, treating in a practical, interesting way the elements of music, etc.

2. How to Listen to Music. Henry Edward Krehbiel. New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1925. 323 p.

This book is for those who love music but who have not studied it with professors. It contains hints and suggestions to untaught lovers of art.

3. Introduction to Music Appreciation and History. Dorothy Tremble Moyer. Boston, Oliver Ditson Co., 1925. 141 p.

The purpose of this book is to trace in nontechnical language the story of music from its origins down to the present time. It may be used by individuals or groups.

4. (The) Listener's Guide to Music. Percy Alfred Scholes. New York, Oxford University Press, 1925. 110 p.

Contains a concert goer's glossary.

5. Music and Life. Thomas Whitney Surette. Boston, Houghton Mifflin Co., 1917. 250 p.

"The author endeavors to set forth the common grounds upon which all art rests and to tempt those who are interested in other arts to become inquisitive about music."

6. (The) Musical Amateur. Robert H. Schauflier. Boston, Houghton Mifflin Co., 1911. 261 p.

This is characterized as a book on the human side of music. Contains chapters on the evolution of a musical amateur; fiddler's lure; the creative listener; the destructive listener; the musical temperament and its drawbacks, etc.

7. (The) Orchestral Instruments and What They Do. Daniel Gregory Mason. New York, The H. W. Gray Co., 1926. 104 p.

Consists of chapters on the nature of sound; constitution of the orchestra; stringed instruments; wood-wind instruments; brass instruments; percussion instruments, etc. The purpose of this book is to assist the concert goer in recognizing the various orchestral instruments by sight and by hearing, and to stimulate his perception of the beauties of orchestral music.

8. Songs and Song Writers. Henry T. Finck. New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1925. 249 p.

A monograph containing short articles on the works of great composers of songs.

9. (The) Spirit of Music. Edward Dickinson. New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1925. 218 p.

An attempt to give knowledge and quicken the love of music and to inspire musical theory and analysis and history with a more humane motive. Chapters deal with how to find the spirit of music; creative expression in playing and singing; and the joy of a musical life, etc.

10. (The) Standard Concert Guide. George P. Upton. Chicago, McClurg, 1917. 432 p.

A book for concert goers. Standard program numbers are described in a brief untechnical manner for the layman who loves music and wishes to become acquainted with the style and contents of the work he hears.

11. Success in Music and How It Is Won. Henry Theophilus Finck. New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1926. 491 p.

A symposium in which some of the greatest singers, pianists, violinists, and teachers reveal the secret of their success. Chapters deal with such subjects as: (1) Does music pay? (2) Are great artists happy? (3) Two Swedish nightingales. (4) Italian prima donnas, etc.

12. What is Good Music? William J. Henderson. New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1925. 198 p.

Contains comments on criticism as opposed to enjoyment; growth of the desire to understand music; living with good music; condition of the uninstructed listener, etc.

LIST OF READING COURSES ISSUED BY UNITED STATES BUREAU OF EDUCATION

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| 1. World's Great Literary Bibles. | 17. Foreign Trade. |
| 2. Great Literature, Ancient, Medieval, and Modern. | 18. Dante. |
| 3. Miscellaneous Reading for Parents. | 19. Master Builders of To-Day. |
| 4. Reading Course for Boys. | 20. Teaching. |
| 5. Reading Course for Girls. | 21. Twenty Good Books for Parents. |
| 6. Thirty Books of Great Fiction. | 22. Agriculture and Country Life. |
| 7. Thirty World Heroes. | 23. How to Know Architecture. |
| 8. American Literature. | 24. Citizenship and Government. |
| 9. Thirty Great Americans. | 25. Pathways to Health. |
| 10. American History. | 26. Sixty Selected Stories for Boys and Girls. |
| 11. France and Her History. | 27. Poetical Literature for Boys and Girls. |
| 12. Heroes of American Democracy. | 28. Kindergarten Ideals in the Home and School. |
| 13. The Call of Blue Waters. | 29. The Pre-School Child. |
| 14. Iron and Steel. | 30. Forty Books for Boys and Girls. |
| 15. Shipbuilding. | 31. The Appreciation of Music. |
| 16. Machine Shop Work. | |

